

Minutes of DAAC Meeting

Attendance

DAAC members present were: Seren Derin, Chair; Joe Tringali, Vice-chair; Irene Barrelet, Clerk; Gerry Weiss; Jim MacRostie; Dana Goddard; and Joan Swift;

Others present were: Julie Hooks Davis and Mark Protti, co-executive directors of ITD; Kathy Ford of Ford Gillen Architects; Bill Gillen of Ford Gillen Architects; Liz Thompson, Landscape Architect; Linda Chalfant, Director of LSSE; Nathaniel Malloy, DAAC staff liaison.

Absent: None

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Derin called the meeting to order at 11:02 a.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Stavros is sponsoring an event on the Town Common Saturday July 24, 2010, to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the passage of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).

MINUTES

Minutes from the June 8, 2010 meeting were reviewed and approved unanimously (7-0) as submitted.

NEW BUSINESS

ITD Variance Request—8 Sunset Avenue

Ms. Hooks Davis explained the history and mission of the Institute for Training & Development (ITD), which it began in 1985 as a non-profit organization that trains up to 12 groups per year of international citizens. With complete funding through the U.S. Department of State, ITD has trained citizens from over 100 countries in workshops that range in duration from 3-6 weeks. ITD provides for all the needs of the participants, offering meals, housing, transportation, and even an allowance, to give a complete educational experience. As such, it is important that all participants live in the same house, and that the structure functions more as a community and a single-family house than as a college dormitory. Currently, ITD subcontracts all meals and classroom facilities with Amherst College. The house itself, as designed for ITD, would have only bedrooms and bathrooms on the upper floors, with all the community gathering space and the accessible bedroom and bathroom on the first floor.

The DAAC agreed that ITD provides an important service, and that making the house at 8 Sunset Ave. accessible would enhance the participants' experience at the same time as it could serve as a model for accessible design and retrofitting, even if a small proportion of the participants are mobility impaired. The committee and ITD representatives and architect discussed the variance requests until the following solutions were mutually agreed upon:

- Sprinklers will be installed on both the front and side porches to make them safe refuges during an emergency.
- The lift will be operable by the user without assistance from another individual.
- The lift and entry turnaround will be covered (not open air).
- The lift will have a mechanical crank or manual backup should the electricity fail.

- The kitchen island will be removed and replaced by a moveable workspace/island that is accessible.
- ITD House Policy will specify that the first floor bathroom, which serves the accessible bedroom, is primarily for use by the occupants of the accessible bedroom. There is laundry in the basement that should be used by other participants before using the first floor facilities.
- The aforementioned house policy will be posted on the bathroom door.
- A pocket door will be installed between the accessible bedroom and bathroom on the first floor.
- The main stairwell is 50" wide and because two other stairwells with railings provide access to the upper floors, this main stairwell does not need a double railing.
- ITD House Policy will specify that all social/group/community gatherings take place only on first floor of house.

Town of Amherst - Community Field Comfort Station

The Town of Amherst is proposing to renovate the comfort station in the southwestern corner of Community Field to make it fully accessible, and to improve the paved path from the lower park area to the comfort station. The existing structure will remain intact, with a 7' extension along the northern side. The path from the lower park will consist of a series of sloped paths and ramps with railings, and will extend the paved area to include a 5' wide apron around the comfort station. The facilities within the comfort station will be fully automated, and will include a changing bench in each restroom. The building will be locked at night and open during the day or when a (sporting) event occurs at Community Field. The structure's exterior will remain painted cinderblock, while proper signs will be located on and next to each restroom door, to be illuminated by soffit lighting. There will be glass block windows and steel doors.

The DAAC agreed that the renovations to the comfort station will be a substantial improvement to the existing facility, and also had the following questions:

- Who are the intended users of the comfort station?
- Are the steel doors too heavy to be accessible?
- What material will be used on the pathway?
- Are there provisions for people to access the comfort station from the baseball field and from the pool—it looks to be a long distance?
- Can the comfort station be accessed from Triangle Street?
- Will the restrooms be heated?

The applicant and architects provided the following answers:

- The comfort station is not a public restroom and is intended to be used only by patrons of community field.
- The steel doors will be light enough to be operated by all individuals.
- The pathway from the lower park and the apron around the comfort station will be scored concrete, similar to the sidewalks in the downtown.
- Although it is a far distance from the baseball field, the restrooms can be accessed along the mown lawn from the fields. If, in the future, a paved path is necessary, the Town will make those accommodations.

- The scope of the project is limited and does not include improving the access from Triangle Street—pedestrian access or vehicular access along the existing driveway. This drive will be open only to service vehicles and not the general public.
- The restrooms will not be heated because they are open seasonally.

Town Common—Temporary Sidewalk

The temporary sidewalk installed on the Town Common for the duration of the Lord Jeffery Inn renovations is not the sidewalk reviewed by the DAAC and approved by the Select Board. The temporary sidewalk was originally to be a slightly raised boardwalk with railings and a tactile surface; this would minimize the impact to the trees and would provide a stable path during inclement weather. The existing temporary sidewalk is a layer of crushed stone where the grass and topsoil were scraped away.

The committee agreed that member, Gerry Weiss, can follow up with the Town of Amherst regarding the temporary sidewalk.

Materials Distributed at Meeting (available upon request in the Planning Department at Town Hall)

Agenda
Library Survey
June 8, 2010 Meeting Minutes
Copy of ITD's AAB Variance Application
Summary of Open Meeting Law

Next Meeting(s)

Tuesday August 10, 2010 @ 11:00 a.m.
Tuesday September 14, 2010 @ 11:00 a.m.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:51 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Nathaniel Malloy, staff liaison